



Press Release

FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

For Immediate Release:

February 2, 2011

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Ford, Chancellor Hyman, President Brooks and over 600 students kick off Black History Month by Exploring Higher Education at Malcolm X College

To increase enrollment of African-American and other minority students in Higher Education

CHICAGO—State Representative La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago), Cheryl L. Hyman, Chancellor of the City Colleges of Chicago, and Ghingo W. Brooks, President of Malcolm X College, joined together to promote education on the first day of Black History Month, bringing more than 600 elementary, junior high and high school students to Malcolm X College.

Each year, according to the Alliance for Excellent Education (AEE), 1.2 million students fail to graduate from high school, with more than half of those students being ethnic minorities. In 2009, the Chicago Public Schools had a drop-out rate of 42.5% of enrolled students. Of the 54.5% high school graduates, only 54.4% of those graduates enrolled into college.

'College is an Option', an event held at Malcolm X College in Chicago on February 1, 2011, the first day of Black History Month, provided participating students with a festive event including motivational speakers, dance tributes, and options for high school students interested in post-secondary opportunities offered at the City Colleges of Chicago. Unique programs at the City Colleges of Chicago include training for careers such as: Physician Assistants at Malcolm X College, Culinary Arts at Kennedy King College, Nursing at Wright College, and Commercial Driver Training at Olive-Harvey College.

"During Black History Month, we celebrate the many contributions of African-Americans to the human race, recall the rich heritage, and reaffirm the commitment to build on that great tradition," said Ford. "Every day, we write history. Regardless of the student's circumstances, college or trade school remains an option for all, and the benefits of a quality education will help every person to live a more perfect story. The 'College is an Option' event emphasizes the special need to increase the presence of African-Americans and other minorities in college enrollment and graduating rates," said Ford.

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